

Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2219

INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07455

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH DELEGATION VISIT TO RHODESIA

REF: PRETORIA 2133

1. WE HAVE SPOKEN TO BYATT, HEAD OF FCO RHODESIAN DEPT AND MEMBER OF BRITISH DELEGATION, LED BY FCO PERMSEC SIR DENIS GREENHILL, WHICH HAS JUST RETURNED FROM 4- DAY VISIT TO RHODESIA. BYATT SAID VISIT WAS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY DISCREETLY TO SOUND OUT VIEWS OF SELECTED POLITICAL LEADERS IN RHODESIA TO SEE IF POSSIBILITY OF MOVEMENT TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING 1971 SETTLEMENT MIGHT HAVE IMPROVED. IT WAS NOT DESIGNED TO PROD PARTIES CONCERNED OR PROPOSE NEW SOLUTIONS. AS A RESULT OF TALKS WITH RHODESIAN OFFICIALS, MUZOREWA AND OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS, DELEGATION HAD TO CONCLUDE THAT SITUATION HAS NOT EVOLVED ENOUGH TO CONSIDER SETTLEMENT ANY NEARER. ON OTHER HAND, THEY ALSO CONCLUDED THAT SITUATION HAD NOT DETERIORATED IN RECENT

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MONTHS AS MUCH AS SOME REPORTS HAD LED THEM TO EXPECT.
FOR EXAMPLE, RACE RELATIONS ARE UNDOUBTEDLY WORSE THAN
THEY WERE, BUT AS FAR AS THE DELEGATION COULD ASCERTAIN
THEY ARE NOT MARKED BY BITTERNESS.

2. COMMENTING THAT THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE PRESS
SPECULATION ABOUT TIMING, LEVEL AND SECRECY OF VISIT,
BYATT NOTED FOLLOWING:

A. SIR ALEC DOUGLAS- HOME WAS COMMITTED TO BRIEF
CONSERVATIVE BACK- BENCH MPS ON RHODESIAN SITUATION
BEFORE AUGUST PARLIAMENTARY RECESS. HE WANTED UP- TO-
DATE INFO FOR THIS PURPOSE AND A VISIT IN JUNE WAS
CONVENIENT FOR ALL CONCERNED.

B. GREENHILL HAD BEEN ASKED TO HEAD DELEGATION
BECAUSE SIR ALEC IS PERSONALLY INTENSELY INTERESTED
IN SEEING A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT AND WANTED BEST ADVICE
ON STATE OF AFFAIRS THAT HE COULD GET.

C. RE SECRECY: PREPARATIONS FOR VISIT, BYATT
SAID, HAD BEEN MADE VERY " DISCREETLY" IN ORDER TO
DISCOURAGE ADVANCE SPECULATION THAT BRITISH WERE
TRYING TO BRING NEW POLICY INITIATIVES TO BEAR. ALSO,
FROM PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW, SOME PEOPLE THAT DELE-
GATION WANTED TO SEE WERE CONCERNED TO AVOID GLARE OF
PUBLICITY. BYATT SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO INTENTION TO
CONCEAL VISIT ONCE IT HAD TAKEN PLACE.

3. BYATT NOTED THAT SIR ALEC WOULD MAKE A BRIEF
STATEMENT ABOUT VISIT IN COMMONS TODAY.

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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